BI-MONTHLY

20TH ISSUE

▽THE MAGAZINE FOR BISEXUALS

Issue No. 20 October 1988 *75p*

YOU'RE NOT PARANOID... ITS ALL TRUE

LESBIAN AND GAY MOVEMENT RECOGNISES BISEXUALITY.

TO PROMOTE OR NOT TO PROMOTE?

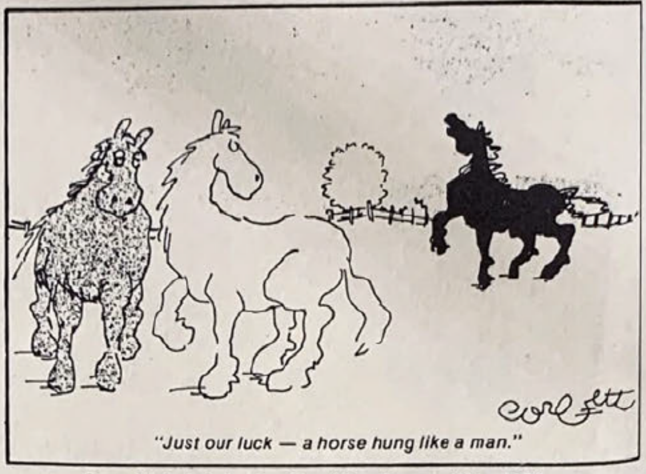
MASOCHISM AND CHILDHOOD FANTASY.

NAMBLA BULLETIN REVIEWED.

Personal ads are free. And they can get you in touch with like-minded people all over the country. At present we keep them in for two issues. As you'll see your name or address are not advertised, only a box number.

TO REPLY TO A BOX NUMBER:- PUT YOUR LETTER(S) INTO AN UNADDRESSED PLAIN ENVELOPE WITH THE BOX NUMBER MARKED CLEARLY IN THE TOP RIGHT HAND CORNER, (SO WE CAN STICK A STAMP OVER IT). PUT THIS INTO A LARGER ENVELOPE, TOGETHER WITH LOOSE STAMP(S) AND SEND TO:- BI-MONTHLY, BOX NUMBER REPLIES, BOX BM-BI, LONDON WC1N 3XX.

PERSONAL ADS



"Just our luck — a horse hung like a man."

From 'Hot Acts', Gay Sunshine Press, USA, 1984

BISEXUAL PHONELINE 031-557 3620 Thursday 7.30-9.30 pm

Information, advice and befriending. Staffed each Thursday by bisexual male and female volunteers.

BISEXUAL PEN-PAL SCHEME

The Pen-Pal scheme offers another way for bisexual people to write to eachother.

Details are circulated without surnames or addresses. Letters are forwarded by the organisers (ie in a box number system) so participants can write and receive letters without disclosing their identity, to others on the Scheme.

For details send an sae to: **Pen-Pal Scheme, Edinburgh Bisexual Group, 58a Broughton St, Edinburgh EH1 3SA.**

Bisexual male, 20, wanting real friends, m/f to write to (and meet). Interests include walking, canoeing, writing, literature & music. Write now!
Box 19/1

Male, 38, based Central Southern England, with country cottage and silly dog seeks bi-women or couple (m/f) for a loving and committed relationship.
Box 19/2

Belfast - is there a woman out there willing to show young tv (25) what it's like to be taken as a woman. (lesbian type of affair). Couples welcome.
Box 19/3

Somerset:- Bi-lady, 29; happily married, would like to meet another bi-lady who would like to form a loving lasting relationship. I am loyal and loving with a sense of fun! (Hubby fully approves).
Box 19/4

Manchester and area: Bi-female. single, 25, graduate wants to meet bi-females/bi-males 23-35. Into books, pubs, talking, having a good time when I'm not working and believe bisexuals have twice the fun! Anything you write to me is of course confidential, photo appreciated but not essential.
Box 19/5

Feminist, bisexual, married woman needs like minded woman for friendship, fun & support. Life is becoming too serious. Bournemouth Area.
Box 19/6

Mature bi-guy wishes to meet bi-ladies and TV's. Your place/my place, can travel within reason. Health conscious, photo if possible. Perth. Box 19/7

Bisexual architect living in attractive house in beautiful rural part of Ireland offers free holiday accommodation to individuals or couples in return for friendly companionship and honest open conversation. No sexual obligation.
Box 19/8

Chelmford, Essex. Lean lanky, loveable lad, 32, looks for lascivious lads and lasses aged likewise to linger lustfully with. Living locally would be lovely. Box 19/9

Bi-male, a new subscriber, interested in new friends m/f. I'm 26, good looks and body, w/e, interests include sport, keepfit, multi-gym, safe sex. Anyone interested? I need a like-minded friend, please write! photo appreciated.
Box 19/10

Older bi-guy seeks bi-lady, TV or lesbian for friendship and more, have own place, car and phone no. for yours. ALA. Photo would be nice. (Perth Dundee area). Box 19/11

Bi-male: graduate, slim, fit, non-smoker, 31. Coming to terms with suppressed homoerotic urges and insatiable curiousity about (other) men's sexuality. My girlfriend may guess but doesn't know. Right now I need a discreet friend (male, couple) like myself to write. Maybe later we could meet, talk or more. Travel widely in England and Wales. Avon/anywhere.
Box 19/12

Bi-girl (17) seeks male or female friends (17-27) for friendship, relationship or fun & careful fling - please state which. Box 19/13

Middle aged (39+) would like to correspond/meet somebody keen on photography, travel and/or art. Any age, either sex. A photograph would be appreciated and returned together with mine.
Box 19/14

Feminist, 23, confused about own sexuality. Likes: books; sex (when not confused); being analytical (but too lazy for jargon or logic); gossip and late-adolescent identity crises; being creatively perverse; writing poetry; & cats, wants women for friendship /relationship/ correspondence.
Box 19/15

LONDON: Bi-guy 24 into abstract art, loud music, socialist and anarchist politics, shy and not very experienced, seeks anyone male or female for friendship and maybe more. Box 19/16

COUPLE, both bisexual, he is in his 50's and she is in her 30's. Would both like to meet similar couple. Can travel or accommodate in either London or North. BOX 20.1

OVERWEIGHT guy age 28, London based but traveller, Would like to meet new friends, couples, any combination for gentle realationship, or careful fun fling. BOX 20.2

BI-Guy looking for similar or stright type of gay male for fun; friendship or whatever happens. I am 38, 6ft, slim athletic type, attractive, and well aware of the modern day crises. Age group 21-44 - London- anywhere. Recently seperated, so please un-bore me. Phone or photos answered first.
BOX 20.3

BISEXUAL male, 40, young looking, quite attractive, small, dark, in-experienced, educated. Wishes to meet men and women for culture, nature outings etc. BOX 20.4

LONDON bisexual male, linguist, 31, seeks male or female friends for friendship, or relationship. BOX 20.5

LONDON anywhere bi-man 52, slim, single, fit, easy going, pleasant pers-onality. Would like to hear from any interesting sincere W/E man over 40 with photo. BOX 20.6

BISEXUAL male, white, 26 with fair hair and blue eyes, clean shaven, non-smoker, affectionate, friendly and sociable, varied interests and unemployed at the moment so lots of time. Seeks young bisexual friends, male or female, black or white, for going places with and maybe more. Photo would be nice but not essential. I look forward to hearing from you.
BOX 20.7

Friendly Bisexual Male, age 21 seeks girlfriend for friendship onwards. My interests include leisure, recreation, travel and the good things in life. W.Midlands. BOX 20.8

NORTH YORKSHIRE, East Coast Area. Bi-lady, young minded 36, happily married would like to meet another bi-lady or lesbian for a loving relationship. I am a loyal one man/girl woman, vegetarian (non-smoker). like rock music, astrolgy, art etc.
BOX 20.9

BI ex Royal Marine. A new comer. I am 37. Would like to meet similar into keep fit, music, sports and chatting. Safe sex. ALA to both sexes. BOX 20.10

CENTRAL SCOTLAND Bi-guy (26) wishes to contact people into fetish fashion for laughs, clubs, easy going fun.
BOX 20.11

Gentle young guy in long-term hetero relationship, early 30's, non-smoker, six-foot, blonde, trim, seeks gentle initiation with a pair of young friends (m/f). Genuine first ad. Eager to explore, but a little apprehensive. Try me? I am safe, discreet and expect same. Photo and frank letter bring similar reply. London and SE preferred.
BOX 20.12

Bisexual married male, 66, keen to meet another in similar position for daytime companionship. Intersts include lit-erature, music, theatre, politics, gardening. Returnable photo appreciated. BOX 20.13

SUSSEX:- Bi lady 26; music student, would like to meet an attractive older woman, to form a loving lasting friendship /relationship. I have an outgoing personality and a sense of fun. I am sensible, genuine and feel a little isolated. So why not drop me a line? ALA. Photo appreciated, confidence respected. BOX 20.14

MANCHESTER/W.YORKS. 39, married bisexual man seeks close rich friendship with similar; must be liberated, brave, intelligent; love kids (I have 2 sons): loathe stereotypes (especially gay ones). Me: Eng. Lit. postgrad, full time father, excellent cook and home-maker, don't suffer fools at all, love the best of everything. Difficult, moody, passionate. Take a risk. BOX 20.15

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THIS ISSUE

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NEWS ~ In Brief

LOOKING FORWARD:- TO THIS YEARS NATIONAL BISEXUAL CONFERENCE

Preparations are well under way for the sixth National Bisexual Conference, hosted by the London Bisexual Group. The event takes place at the Friends Meeting House, 120 Heath Street, Hampstead, London NW3, from October 28th - 30th, (apart from Friday evening registration at the Fallen Angel, Graham Street, Islington, N1 - see back page).

There will be workshops on many different topics of interest to bisexuals and their allies. A social is being organised for the Saturday night, with live bands.

The LBG is providing accomodation for those attending from outside London, though bring a sleeping bag.

SURVEY SHOWS:- ONE IN TEN

A survey by **Cosmopolitan** (October issue) of 21,000 of its single women readers showed 3% to be actively bisexual and 1% lesbian, with another 6% having been strongly attracted or tempeted to have an affair with another woman. This would make 9% bisexual. One in ten of the women between 30 and 34 have had a lesbian love affair.

Cosmopolitan attacked women who 'would sleep with a bisexual man', saying that this puts them at a greater risk of getting AIDS.

68% said they would not sleep with a bisexual man. 25% said they would if he was 'special'. 38% of the younger women said they would sleep with a bisexual man.

Concerning AIDS, well over half have changed their behaviour, but around a third haven't.

One in three women between the ages of 30 and 34 have terminated a pregnancy.

BISEXUAL LIVES:- BEST SELLER

On 24th June the sales of the book BISEXUAL LIVES had already topped seven hundred copies. The book produced by Off Pink Publishing continues to sell well, with many bookshops quickly selling out. In a survey of Alternative Bookshops it was recorded as 5th best seller.

Two Reviews of BISEXUAL LIVES are included on pages 16 and 17 of this issue.

AL-721:- NOW AVAILABLE ON PRESCRIPTION

AIDS drug AL-721, which has shown encouraging results in the United States is now available on prescription from GPs. It is not a 'cure', and is still undergoing clinical trials. The drug is said to work by altering the composition of the HIV virus's outer membrane and thus interfering with the virus's ability to penetrate healthy cells.

TERRENCE HIGGINS TRUST - UNDER THREAT

The Department of Health will abolish central governement funding for Britain's major AIDS charity, the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT), in three years time, unless the Trust succeeds in its battle to reverse the decision.

The move would force the Trust to liaise with local, regional and district health authorities - over 40 bodies in all - for funding. It would involve a massive increase in bureacracy, with no guarantee that the poverty stricken authorities will be willing or able to provide.

AIDS activists Simon Watney and Tony Whitehead as planning to start a massive campaign to protect the Trust, which has already been denounced by some Tory MPs as an organisation which promotes homosexuality.

Success For Bisexuals Working Within the Lesbian and Gay Movement

CHE and OLGA are the two main National Lesbian and Gay Campaign Groups. They may differ in many respects, but both organisations have recently made changes which mark an important advance for bisexuals and the concept of 'bisexuality'. Martin Burgess takes a look at the progress made.

In the previous issue I promised that BI-MONTHLY would approach the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) and the Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Action (OLGA) for their views on bisexuality and to ask them to submit something to this historic twentieth issue.

I received no reply at all from OLGA, and a positive response from the CHE Executive Committee (of which I am a member), but no written submission.

CHE

A few days before the CHE Conference, (Leicester 27-29th August) I went to speak at Hampstead Gay Group, on the subject of bisexuality. Here the discussion seemed to waver off into tangents of prejudice and there was scant regard for what anyone else had to say (including me).

Since CHE is also predominantly white, male, middle-class and middle-aged, I expected a similar confused, but slightly (and politely) hostile reaction.

Minor elation has now settled to what I may reflectively term as 'pleasant suprise'. With only one vote in opposition a motion was passed acknowledging that it is useful to use the word 'bisexual' in lesbian and gay campaign work, and that the word should be used alongside 'lesbian and gay' at some point in each publication. **The existence of bisexuality has been recognised, and that's official.**

Workshop on bisexuality

David Burkle, founder of the London Bisexual Group, was invited to lead this workshop, of about twenty people.

He spoke about his own sexuality, his identity, his life and relationships. The reality of life for bisexuals, both in the straight world and in the lesbian and gay world, was clearly described.

In the discussion that followed, other bisexuals spoke, and were listened to. We split into two groups, to get the views of more people. Objections arose in my group from a non-CHE member there as an observer, a man studying 'feminism', whose objection was that 'feminists wouldn't like it'. He admitted that the feminist movement is not a libertarian one, a fact that he seemed to admire. The one woman present in the workshop did not support his views, speaking out strongly as a bisexual woman.

Other points made were that bisexuality may just act as another label, divisive to the lesbian and gay movement, or that bisexuality may in some way undermine the lesbian and gay identities. I made the point that as bisexuals within CHE, we are firmly committed to the struggle for lesbian and gay rights, but that in this fight the concept of bisexuality is a useful one, as it more accurately represents the sexuality of many, as it actually is.

OLGA
NATIONAL

Kate Fearnley spoke as a bisexual woman, supporting an 'Open Statement on Bisexuality' drawn up for discussion by Jenni Wilson.

When the statement was passed, like CHE with only one vote against, it was reported that you could have knocked Kate over with a feather!

Discussion within OLGA

Kate Fearnley did not ask for a bisexual caucus with veto rights, as I had done at OLGA's AGM in December of last year (see issue 19); rather she supported the idea of a seperate 'Bisexual Symposium' within OLGA, like the 'Scottish Symposium' already in existence.

Kate went to the Scottish Symposium first, which was completely supportive. There was more debate within the lesbian caucus (which is one of the caucuses with the right of veto of any motions put to Conference).

One woman raised the spectre of a bisexual woman friend of hers, who was in a relationship with a man. She did not want her or others like her within the organisation.

Kate Fearnley

Another question was raised about the alleged threat of bisexual men. Kate answered by saying that gay men themselves are not perfect, that anyone who acts unreasonably should be thrown out.

In her speech to the Conference, Kate stated that bisexuals are working for the same aims as lesbians and gays; so that forcing bisexuals into parallel organisations, as, for example, the National Union of Students Lesbian and Gay Campaign has done, can only be inefficient, with the splitting of resources, human and financial.

OLGA also agreed to ammend their membership forms so they read: 'I identify as lesbian/gay/bisexual and support the aims and objectives of OLGA.'

It was also promised that there should be a meeting for all bisexuals within OLGA.

COMMENT

What has happened within OLGA and CHE is remarkable, considering the prejudice shown towards bisexuals and bisexuality in the lesbian and gay scenes, both political and social.

Although what has happened has been remarkable it hasn't come from no-where, it has been the result of campaigning by bisexuals within the lesbian and gay movement and **Bi-Monthly** has played its part. It is also the sign of the beginning of an increased awareness of bisexuality in society as a whole.

Looking to the future it is important that bisexuals become involved in campaigning for lesbian and gay rights. We also have the task of promoting a better understanding of bisexuality within the lesbian and gay movement. There are good grounds for criticising CHE and OLGA, neither will change society overnight, but we should still get involved.

We are now allowed to organise as an accepted part of the lesbian and gay movement. Let us do so!

CHE Conference - YOUTH

John Jackson of CHE is attempting to set up a new national lesbian and gay youth group, to answer the enormous need for a help, advice and befriending group, as well as providing a voice for young lesbians, gays and bisexuals. Gez Jones takes a critical look at the Youth Workshop at CHE's Annual Conference:-

There were about six of us under 26 at the CHE Conference this year. This was quite a good attendance considering the restrictions imposed on young people (family, school, unemployment, and general lack of financial resources), and the stereotypical image of CHE as a group of predominantly ageing people.

After seeing how positive and open this conference was on bisexuality, I went to the Youth Workshop optimistically expecting a similar degree of liberated response. But we had little chance of expressing ourselves in this workshop, having no space of our own in a group consisting of an older majority, whose idea of a Youth Workshop was giving advice on how we should be organising ourselves.

This is obviously not the way to represent our experiences, ideas, needs and problems. These people gave more emphasis to teachers and social workers (who with parents, are our major oppressors), than giving freedom and space to those of us who have to face these problems, and therefore need to organise ourselves to provide support, representation and information, where only we can see the need.

However, we had a more productive meeting that evening for young people only. And we will hopefully be sending a newsletter to CHE members and Youth groups, with a view to beginning a group within CHE.

As with the treatment of every oppressed group one characteristic is clear and significant; that those within the group are denied the right to speak for themselves. Where more powerful groups claim this right, they have little interest in listening.

OPEN STATEMENT ON BISEXUALITY

- OLGA 28.9.88

OLGA exists to fight discrimination against lesbians and gay men and against the lesbian and gay community.

OLGA is working towards equality for all regardless of age, gender, ability, colour, class, race or sexuality.

OLGA believes in the right of self definition. The right must include the right of self definition of sexuality. Bisexuals are discriminated against by society on similar if not the same grounds as lesbians and gays are.

Heterosexism is an attack on the lifestyles of bisexuals as well as an attack on the lifestyle of lesbians and gay men.

On the whole bisexuals and lesbians and gay men have common aims and share common oppression.

OLGA is an organisation to promote and support those who identify as lesbian or gay. OLGA willingly accepts as members self-defined bisexuals who identify with the aims, objectives and struggles of OLGA.

For the above reasons and because of the evolution of the structure we do not believe there is a need for a bisexual caucus within OLGA.

GS
for lesbians gays bisexuals

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BI-MONTHLY in Take Over SHOCK

Bi-Monthly Magazine has been caught up in the wave of hectic financial activity sweeping the lesbian and gay market place.

FIRST there was **Capital Gay**'s attempt to buy the bigger **Gay Times** (with in turn owns a gay pornography empire including **Zipper**, **Vulcan** and **Mister**).

THEN there was the **Pink Paper** who threatened legal action if **Capital Gay** didn't sell up, promising reassuringly,

"Although owned by the same publishing house we will be keen to retain the individual character of each publication."

BI-MONTHLY EDITOR FACES DISCIPLINARY ACTION

It has been alleged that 'while drunk in charge of a slow moving magazine' (technically punishable with up to six months in prison), that Martin Burgess attempted to sell **Bi-Monthly Magazine** to **Gay Times**, for £500 in used notes, and a pair of dark glasses.

The board of directors of **Bionic Publications**, are reported to be considering the strictest possible punishment for the reculcitrant editor, and may well send him to **OLGA**'s AGM, where he would face almost certain death.

Bionic Publications and **Off Pink Publishing Company**, together with an 'anonymous donor', and Barclays Bank (Deptford Branch), are reported to be forming a consortium, to **TURN THE TABLES ON GAY TIMES**, by buying **The Pink Paper**, which is buying **Capital Gay**, which in turn is buying **Gay Times**.

The editor of **Gay Times**, or **GT**, as it is more discretely titled, **GT**, has expressed concern that **GT** will be forced to use the word 'bisexual', or to cover 'bisexual news stories', or even at the very worst, to be forced to go to **CHE** conferences.

MEANWHILE the City is reported to be excited at the prospect of **Bi-Monthly Magazine** gaining control of the whole of lesbian and gay publishing in this country.

SECTION 28 - LATEST

Section 28 of the Local Government Act, forbidding the 'intentional promotion of homosexuality' by Local Authorities came into effect in June of this year.

It followed the biggest ever demonstrations of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, ever in this country, twenty thousand in Manchester, thirty thousand in London. This protest was echoed the world over with support across America and Europe. In Amsterdam several thousand marched against the latest attack on Human Rights, in this country.

The Clause, which many right wing bigots were hoping to use as a springboard, to further discrimination was met with such a sustained protest that its effects have been limited.

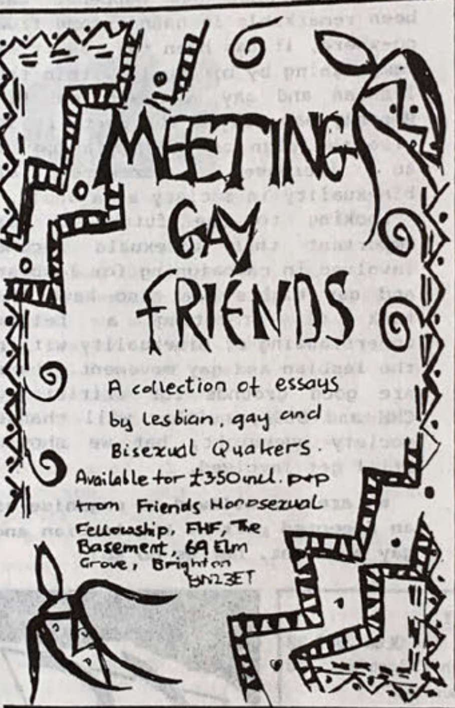
The vagueness of the wording, leaving it so open to interpretation, has now been turned back on its proposers, and it seems that the Section is now almost meaningless.

The few councils that funded lesbian and gay groups and phonelines, continue to do so, changing the wording of the appropriate documents where necessary.

The apparant main target of the Clause, schools, fails because of the proposers own stupidity. The Government's own Education Act 1986 put the conduct of maintained schools under the direction of the Governing Body, not the Local Authority.

Section 28 has not been taken to court, though are many examples of discriminatory councils using Section 28 as a justification for their prejudice. In schools too Section 28 helps encourage an anti-gay atmosphere.

As law Section 28 is largely redundant. It's most potent effect is as a symbol of the prejudice of the present Parliament.



PINK PAPER & the Great Bisexual Debate

First the Pink Paper printed a review of 'Bisexual Lives' titled 'Misunderstood Lives' that bordered on the hysterical. Apparantly Sue O'Sullivan who wrote it got so emotional that she broke down and gave the review to a male friend to finish. The review reflects a prejudice very much concerned with personal problems around her own sexuality.

About a month ago a letter to the Pink Postbag, 'FED UP WITH BISEXUALS', complained that the majority of the gay community are fed up with those bisexuals using the word 'gay' to describe themselves!

'The word 'gay' means HOMOSEXUAL and of course, homosexuals do not have sex with the opposite sex, EVER.'

The three co-authors claimed not to be camp queens, but **normal**, and complained 'we are fed up with being mixed up with people who are not sure of their sexuality.

Replies poured in from all over the country. One from the 'knowingly self-confident community of London Bisexuals' (ie the LBG), attacked the 'bisexual myth', that those who label themselves as bisexuals are unsure of their sexuality.

This letter and others developed the theme that it is sad and stupid for lesbians and gays to exhibit narrow minded and prejudiced views on sexuality, in the same way that heterosexual society does.

Gideon Spoonbill from Bristol, finished his letter by saying, **'If you have managed to accept yourself as a gay man** or **lesbian woman, (against all outside attempts to put you off the idea), and yet you still have the arrogance to try to tell me that your sexuality is right and mine wrong, then you have my smiling permission to crawl up your own arsehole.'**

Club For The Significantly Bisexual

It used to be called the **Bisex Club** but has now dropped that name. It's a club with around 140 members, ran by Anastasia the 'Mistress of Love'.

Many of the members join in response to ads placed in contact magazines. The membership consists mostly of single males in their thirties, about 50% transvestite, and 50% have mild S/M interests.

Anastasia does not charge for membership, but there are charges to cover the costs of the events that are run, anything from parties all around the country (which Anastasia describes as 'intimate affairs') through to country weekends, or even the odd holiday abroad.

The club is more than just a social club. One of the priorites of the club is that fun may be enjoyed safely. Anastasia stresses that health matters, an area in which the club has stringent rules.

If you're interested write saying what you want of the club to:- Anastasia, c/o 12 Thornton Road, Leytonstone, London E11 4DH.

Anastasia undertakes personally, if necessary, to see that no-one leaves without satisfaction!

HOMOSEXUALITY AND LIBERATION

Part Three - The Ideology of Oppression

This is the third of a series of articles, by Martin Burgess looking at the ideas contained within the book 'Homosexuality and Liberation' by Mario Mieli

Mieli's a gay man who builds a whole theory of gay liberation on the concept of everyone being born with the potential to be bisexual; to be more precise, born with an undifferentiated desire, which is 'transexual' in that it knows no division of gender.

Mieli states that heterosexuality and homosexuality are mutually exclusive, with there being very few people who experience conscious sexual attraction to both sexes. He categorises the 'bisexuals' that do exist as being either predominantly heterosexual or predominantly homosexual. He claims that a revolutionary homosexual who might well have sexual relationships with women would not define himself as bisexual, among other reasons because if bisexuality is taken as the sum of heterosexuality and homosexuality, he will refuse to define his relations with women as heterosexual. He will rather say that these encounters are largely tainted by heterosexual conditioning, a conditioning which he seeks to combat and overcome.

Here Mieli intellectualises anti-bisexual prejudice, which is not often so clearly put into words, but the points he makes are worth considering.

Yes, society has quite successfully polarised sexuality into hetero- and homosexual. It's also true that many bisexuals are predominantly heterosexual or predominantly homosexual, particularly in terms of lifestyle, since there are very real social pressures to fit into one camp or the other. However it is not true to say that this means that the 'predominantly homosexual' bisexual is necessarily predominantly homosexual in his or her basic sexuality.

As bisexuals we can acknowledge the difference between our hetero- and homosexual relations, or even the extent to which our own sexuality may have been polarised, so it appears to have two components. However many bisexuals live out, to a large extent, the Mieli concept of liberation: that the sex of the partner is irrelevant.

Where the gender of the partner is relevant, is on a political level. Bisexual politics remains predominantly homosexual, as it is homosexuality that society represses, and we recognise the importance of the liberation of homo-erotic desire, both for ourselves and society as a whole.

As Mieli says heterosexual relations are largely tainted by heterosexual conditioning (but then so are homosexual relations); so as bisexuals we should be taking a serious look at our heterosexual relationships.

What Mieli couldn't take into account, writing in the early seventies, was a bisexual movement with its own politics. **Crucially we do not seek to define bisexuality as merely the sum of heterosexuality and homosexuality, rather we want to attack and challenge the heterosexual 'norm' along with its inherent sexism.**

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Mieli attacks the heterosexaul 'norm' in his Chapter **The ideology of oppression:-**

The heterosexual 'norm', maintained by the state, by religion (in matrimony) and by the family, is the dictatorship of heterosexual genitality (where genitality is taken to mean the penetration of the female sex organ, by the male for the purpose of procreation).

While homoeroticism is almost banned from society, or at best merely tolerated, the ideal of heterosexual 'love' is broadcast in every possible way, and yet this much trumpeted 'love' is not love at all. The so-called 'normal' couple is based on a bond which is the very alienation of love. The woman is objectified and stereotyped, and the phallic and deficient male is not man but the negation of both man and woman.

This alienated heterosexuality sometimes actually uses elements of the repressed, yet latent homosexuality; heterosexual men desire a disguised homosexual fantasy of 'woman'. The women of pornographic magazines are characterised by stiffness of form (erect breasts, firm and protruding buttocks) whereas real women generally tend to a softness of form.

Heterosexual society is marked by a deep form of 'racism' towards those who love people of the same sex. The abundance of synonyms, and the euphemisms that always accompany them bear witness to the attraction and the contorted curiosity that the phenomenon generates.

In the eyes of the greater part of the so-called 'normal' people, heterosexuality goes together with procreation, while homosexuality is ranked with vice and prostitution.

Mieli attacks **The dogma of procreation;**

If people try and develop a study of the 'reasons for homosexual behaviour', ("Just what makes people 'homosexual'") why don't they also investigate the reasons for the fixation of desire, by the majority, on 'objects' of the 'opposite' sex? The two questions are complementary and neither can be answered without the other.

The usual way in which heterosexuality is presented as 'normal' is through the equation of love with procreation. Yet procreation proceeds from a sexual act that is far from exhausting the entire range of desire, the full scope of its gradations. It is not fertilisation that animals seek, but simply sensual pleasure. They seek pleasure and achieve fertilisation by a fluke. Just as with the animals, to consider procreation as the goal of human sexuality is to mystify heterosexual intercourse, attributing to it a 'metaphysical purpose'.

In nature, sex is not exclusively directed to reproduction, many animals male and female develop homosexual relations.

Many people see in sexuality the goal of procreation, but they refuse to recognise this teleology as their own judgement. And misunderstanding it this way, they tend to absolutise it, imputing to nature a historically determined peculiarity of human thinking.

The persecution of homosexuality is part and parcel of the wider context of general sexual repression. The dogma of procreation as the sole goal of sexuality grew up historically as the ideological underpinning for the effective reduction of Eros to monogamous heterosexuality.

The procreation dogma forms part of patriarchal religion and culture. Only women can really understand and know what procreation involves, and how procreation is linked with sexuality. By oppressing women and sexuality, society represses the procreative instinct that forms part of Eros, and the female Eros in particular.

At all events we can see how absurd it is today to continue rejecting homosexuality as alien to procreation, when our planet is suffering among other things from overpopulation. The principal cause of this is nothing but the oppressive persistence of the anti-homosexual taboo.

To promote or not to promote - That is The Question

In the face of Section 28 and the current repressive climate many lesbian and gay groups are maintaining that homosexuality 'cannot be promoted'. Al from the London Bisexual Group suggests otherwise.

The argument seems to go that you've either 'got it' or you haven't, and that if you've 'got it' you were born with it and grew up knowing all about it. It is easy to see how we as a movement are being pushed into this defensive position, reminiscent of ' we can't help it so please don't criminalise us' position of the 'movement earlier this century. If homosexuality cannot and is not being promoted, then Section 28 will have no effect on us and we can carry on as before, or can we?

The reality is that we are placing ourselves in a false position, and if forced to become entrenched in it we will lose many of our gains already made and ultimately, worst of all, our self-respect.

While I accept that many lesbians and gay men do feel they were 'born with it' and grew up struggling to express and be accepted for the way they felt about themselves, for others of us this was not the case.

My own sexuality was so repressed that I hardly felt anything at all sexually until I was about nineteen. This was coupled with a lack of information that I now find appalling. How could my mother help, for whom sex was 'giving yourself to the man you loved' with the implication that the pleasure was all on his side?

And my father's response was total silence. I was twenty before I was able to discuss sex with him, by which time I'd had more experience of the subject than he had.

I didn't know what a lesbian was until I was sixteen. I didn't hear the word 'bisexual' until I was eighteen and at University. Getting these pieses of vital information happened at the same time I began to find myself in situations where I could discuss my body and my sexuality openly with other women.

From then on I moved rapidly. At sixteen I still said I wouldn't have sex with a man until I was married. There was nothing wrong with lesbians, I just wasn't one. At seventeen I and another young woman 'went through' man after man. I played the heterosexual role games in a desperate bid to fit into a world where I'd always been an outsider. I played the games for status and for love of my friend, I got nothing sexually out of it for myself. Around this time I could have been heard to say, " If I was a man I'd find so and so attractive". But I was changing.

At eighteen I began, for the first time, to consider the possibility that I, as a woman, might find other women attractive.

At university I played a seventeen year old dyke in a play. At nineteen I had may first orgasm.

And at twenty it all came together. I had my first even part-way satisfactory relationship with a man, in which I realised, for the first time, that I could have desires and pleasure too.

I dreamed I was in bed with Joan Armatrading, and immediately afterwards 'came out' to my close friends as bisexual, finally convinced. Two weeks later I slept with my first woman. After we'd made love she asked me if I was sure I hadn't slept with a woman before. I was sure, but I felt like I had come home.

It was not all plain sailing. There followed a year of even more confusion, in which I learned all the prejudices that gather around bisexuals, some of which I shared with the local lesbians, some of which I did not.

What ended my confusion was discovering the London Bisexual Group and attending the Second National Conference on Bisexuality. Meeting others who had similar experiences, discovering the term 'Lesbian Identified Bisexual' - how I needed the support and validation I got. Now I am very happy and proud to be bisexual. Despite the shit from outside it's who I am, and I love it!

If it hadn't been for people 'promoting' lesbianism and bisexuality to me, I would never have achieved the strength and joy of where I am today. Perhaps in time I would have discovered my bisexuality for myself; but I think it is more likely that it would have remained hidden, festered inside and maybe have prevented me from experiencing any pleasure at all. After I first made love with a woman I felt so liberated, free to love my own body in a new way. Those who say sexuality is given and cannot be promoted would deny me my awakening - and that of how many others?

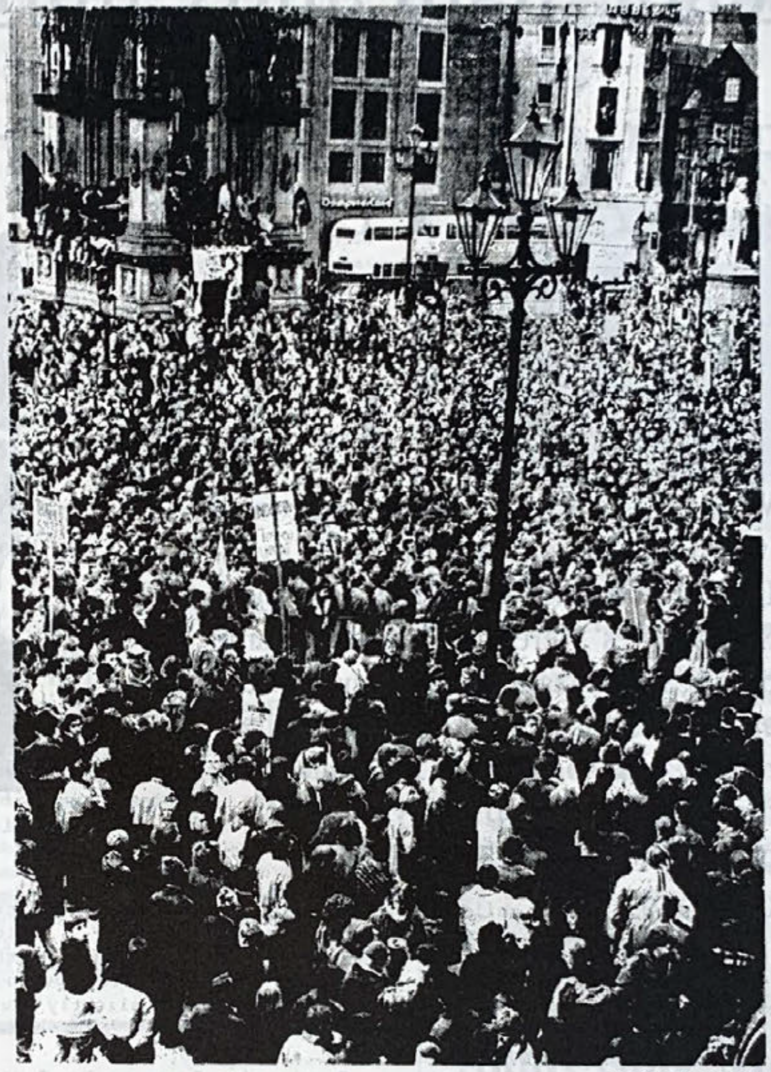
In the 'outside world' **heterosexuality is promoted all the time**, in every area of life, right from when as young and susceptible children we first begin to explore the world. Promoting homosexuality will not force people to become lesbian, gay or bisexual - **the idea is ludicrous**. All we can begin to do is to redress a little bit of the balance that is weighted so heavily against us.

It is the element of choice that is so controversial at the present time. The dangers are obvious - if we publicly embrace the element of choice in our sexuality, then the 'we can't help it' plea must go once and for all, and this will leave us open to attack. And yet, knowing what we know, this is exactly what we must do. By choice I do not mean that we choose whether we are attracted to the same of the 'opposite' sex (or both), but that we choose whether to acknowledge this attraction, and how to behave when we have acknowledged it. Many of our parents' generation, and indeed many of our own, repressed their homosexual leanings, became celibate or struggled to live a 'normal' sexual lifestyle. While we honour their pain, we will do this no longer. We must make a positive choice for our homosexuality, a choice that we will no longer repress ourselves or others but will do all we can to give others, also, the freedom to choose. What does this mean? It means promoting homosexuality.

What does promoting homosexuality mean?

It means, **firstly**, being visible. It is possible that eventually everyone will discover their sexuality on their own: but I am sure that for many, lack of visible alternatives to 'the norm' stops growth before it has even had a chance to begin. Being visible is one of the most radical things we can do, in any alternative way of life we are presenting, and particular in that tabooed subject, our sexuality. Being visible also carries with it the need to make more information available to people, and to create situations in which they can explore their sexuality for themselves.

Secondly we must give people words. We live in a society that uses words to define, to label, to give credibility and status. We may deplore this situation, but we cannot deny its power or, in the short term, change it. One of the most damaging things society has done is to tell us that we don't exist, to refuse to define us and thereby enable itself to ignore us. We must refuse to be ignored. We will have our own definitions, our own labels, our own words. And we will share them with as many people as possible so they will know what the choices are.



PHOTOGRAPH JEAN FRASER

STOP THE CLAUSE MARCH, MANCHESTER, 20.2.88

Thirdly, promoting homosexuality means creating positive images for ourselves. It is not enough just to work for non-discrimination (although that is vital). We need to know and to affirm to others that it is good to be who we are. We do not want homosexuality to be simply tolerated, we need to actively celebrate it. We need to be strong in our choices, and joyful in the living of them. Yes, being lesbian, gay or bisexual in this society is hard. And, yes, it will get harder, and in this Section 28 will play its part. But we must not get deluded into thinking that it is our sexuality that is the problem. Our sexuality is fine, it is society's attitude to it that is at fault, and it is this that we are working to change.

On April 30th, thirty thousand people marched on London in what was the largest promotion of homosexuality that this country has ever seen. We do not have to hide in corners, become defensive and deny ourselves. Are we going to crawl back into the closet, return to the days of 'The Well of Loneliness' and the 'Third Sex'? Or are we going to make 'Glad to be Gay' a reality, and a viable alternative to those who are 'happy to be het'?

We must promote homosexuality, and go on promoting it in every way we can, legal and, if needs be, illegal. We do not need to lose our courage now we have come so far. We have at least thirty thousand people behind us. It is not such an isolated position.

Masochism and Childhood fantasy

DARING TO SPEAK

Why am I so suspicious, so antagonistic when I hear the letters S&M? Why did I recoil in horror when bisexuals and S&M dykes' were branded in the same breath at one stage in the London Lesbian and Gay Centre! Why is the fear, the repugnance so deep? Is it because I feel the echoes run deep in myself, that I cannot run away fast enough?

Illustrations from the book **COMING TO POWER**, by SAMOIS, a lesbian/feminist S/M organisation.

As an isolated, lonely child, I read voraciously and when I couldn't read I fantasised. To begin with, these fantasies were not obviously sexual and yet, the second most prominent category (after the ones about horses) were those I would now, haltingly, term 'masochistic'. And, when I finally started getting turned on by lovers and having orgasms, I at last realised where I had felt the beginnings of the sensations before. And the memory came back of me, having supposed to have gone to sleep, lying in the darkness making my interminable stories, and the strange feelings I used to have, as if I wanted to pee - but my bladder was empty.

When I was about eight and my brother ten, we would play 'master/slave' games in our bedroom. We would give each other orders and hit each other on the bum with hairbrushes when we disobeyed them. Though we took turn and turn about we both always wanted to be the slave - and we always disobeyed orders. I can still remember the feeling of loss when my brother told me he would no longer play these games with me.

Around the same time I can also remember a girlfriend and I 'punishing' our dolls. We undressed them, smacked their bottoms, humiliated them, put water on thier legs to show they were peeing. I can remember the slightly guilty excitement that all this made us feel.

By the time I was twelve I had no friends close enough to share my fantasies with. And so I dreamed alone, usually in bed at night. A typical fantasy was - I was kidnapped by rough men and taken to a place, like a farm or a village but with high fences all around. There I would be kept in cages with other boys and girls, wire netting dividing us. At night we would huddle together against the wire for contact. During the day we would be made to pull carts, maybe six of us at a time, all naked, and whipped if we disobeyed. Eventually we would find a way to escape, but it was not those details that I dwelt on or that excited me.

> "I can remember the slightly guilty excitement that all this made us feel."

Other fantasies included various 'punishments' for vague deeds and by vague people. But the details of the punishments were far from vague. They involved beatings and humiliation. One I remember involved being treated 'as a baby', put in a cot with a nappy on and attached to some intricate machine to make me shit. In real life I had a terror of physical pain, and a very low resistance to it. I am sure I would soon have complained if the hairbrush had been administered at all strongly. These fantasies would go on for varying lengths of time, a new installment every night, for as long as ones particular magic lasted. I'm not sure if I saw them as particulary 'wrong' or 'abnormal', although I knew enough not to share them with anybody else. I was aware, in many ways, of being 'different' and unacceptable. I lived in a world inside my head, and I was sure I would never find enyone to share it with me.

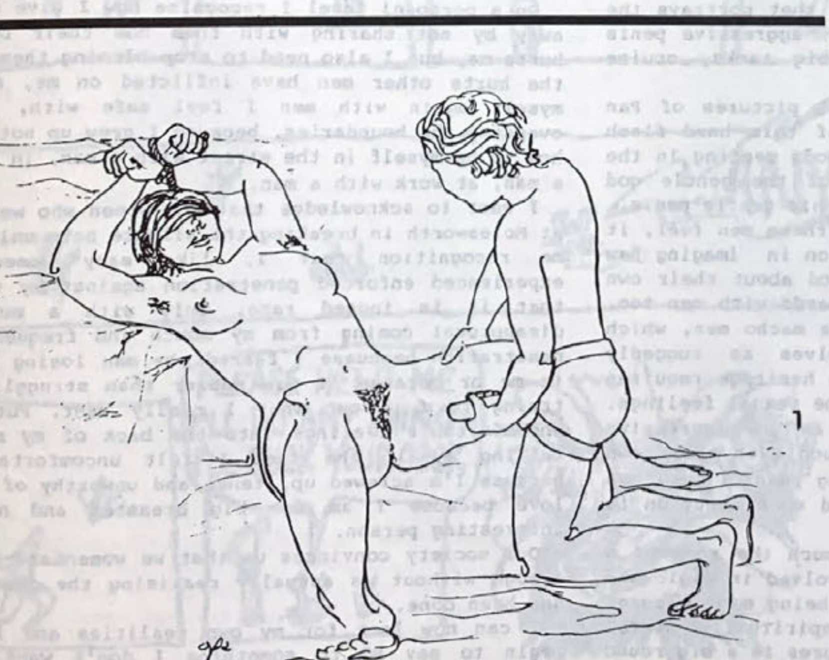
At the time I certainly didn't associate these fantasies with sex. My sexuality had a brief period of semi-consciousness when I was around five. I used to play kiss chase, boys against girls, with the others in the infant school playground. My fantasies then revolved around catching one of the boys and conducting various experiments on him, probably a healthy desire to find out what made them 'different'. After this brief period my sexuality went underground. From about twelve I dreamed of having a boyfriend, the main way for a girl to gain status in the society I found myself, but these dreams involved no feelings of excitement.

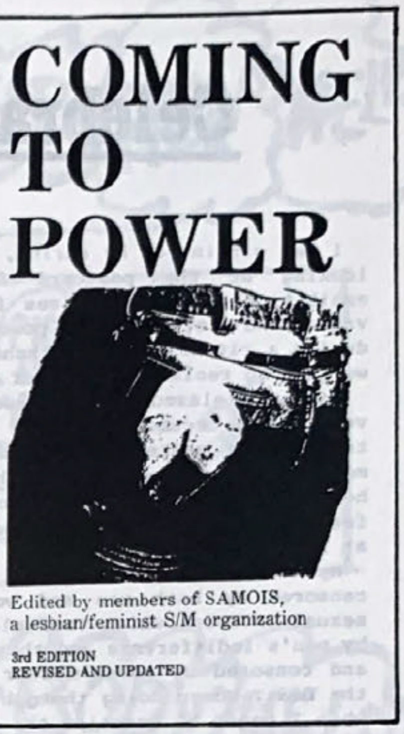
When I was older I had a recurring, now consciously sexual, fantasy involving a doctor-type man who lay me on a couch and experimented, in a gentle but very detached,'scientific' manner, on my cunt. By then I think I had learnt to be ashamed of my earlier fantasies, and this sort of passivity was all I would allow myself. Then I discoverd feminism and even this last bastion of my fantasy life, once so all-consuming, had to go. From then on I masturbated without fantasy. The occasional glimpses of my masochism I still received I justified with the theory that, when your consciousness is changing, your fantasy life is often the last to change.

This may be true, but it does not explain very much. The questions remain. Why did my developing sexuality, after the age of about seven, find its roots in masochism? Was it an attempt to come to terms with the punishments and humiliation I was receiving at the time from a 'bitter and frustrated' women teacher? Did some terrible incident occur, now lost, that so affected my sexual growth that it became forever associated with fear? What was I trying to act out in my games with my brother (what, for that matter, was he trying to come to terms with)? Sometimes I despair of finding the answers to these questions. For years I solved the problem of my masochism by ignoring it, but it has not gone away. It has been waiting, patiently, for me to acknowledge its existence.

Recently, through self exploration and counselling, I have become so aware of my fears around sex that at the moment it seems impossible for me to have sex with anyone at all. Surely this fear, hidden for so long, and my childhood masochistic fantasies must be connected, must have a common sourse. But how to find it? Should I embrace my masochism or try to 'cure' it? One thing is certain, whether it is a 'right on' thing to admit it to or not, I cannot go on ignoring it for ever.

I found writing this article terrifying, and the idea of publishing it is even worse. And yet I feel it's time my silence was broken. And it has occured to me that others, too, may have been holding silence for years, afraid to open their mouths for fear of ridicule, suspicion, revulsion or rejection. I have decided to publish this article without a name, but if you have had similar experiences, or have suggestions to make as to where I go from here, do write to BM/BI and your letters will be passed on.





COMING TO POWER

Edited by members of SAMOIS, a lesbian/feminist S/M organization

3rd EDITION
REVISED AND UPDATED

Sadism and Masochism - S&M (Sado masochism - SM or S/M) is discussed positively in two very different books.

COMING TO POWER, 'SAMOIS', Alyson Publications Inc, contains writings and graphics on Lesbian S/M.

S-M THE LAST TABOO, Gerald and Caroline Green, Grove Press, is much more heterosexual, historical and 'intellectual', with a good dose of pornographic writings in the Appendix.

Addressing Men

There is an 'SM debate' that surfaces in lesbian feminist circles. Recently 'Face to Face', a video production team, filmed a discussion in front of nearly two hundred lesbians (The Pink Paper, 8th September).

The plea from **Coming to Power** is for lesbian feminists to reexamine the politics of sex and power. 'The challenge of talking personally and explicitly about all the ways we are sexual and how our sexuality differs, is not so much destructive as it is corrective, and necessary.'

I'd like to extend this plea to male readers of Bi-Monthly. For men there is no real SM debate, and yet if the CP (Corporal Punishment), Bondage and Submission videos and magazines are anything to go by, SM plays an important part in the sexuality of many men. It is time that we started talking about our sexuality as it really is. **MB**

Celebration of the flaccid penis

I was sitting at my shrine, my venus candle alight, looking at the postcard from the Judy Chicago exhibition which symbolises for me a vibrant living vagina and a strong woman power. The candle I received during a ritual candle workshop at Glastonbury, while working to reclaim a sense of my own physical beauty.

Feeling relaxed and centred and not concentrating very hard I became aware that I was feeling good after the meeting yesterday. The meeting being the second meeting about the Molesworth rapes. I was feeling healed as a result of being able to share my feelings, feeling that I had been listened to by both women and at least some of the men, men I like and respect.

My main feelings were about having felt in the past censored by both men and women when talking about sexual invasion which took place in my life. Censored by men's indifference and their not wanting to listen, and censored by women's fear at not wanting to rock the boat. Women doing the job for men of silencing me when I began to question the experiences I was having with men. I got a very strong message from a woman friend that I was sexually screwed up if I didn't want penetration, which silenced me for another nine years.

While sharing some of my experiences I recognised the years of loneliness that I had felt not being able to speak out my feelings, and that in fact I was still responding to old records of fearfulness that I would experience the same rejections as I had before. Whereas, here and now there were some women who could listen, and that some men had begun to hear and try to understand.

I went on to realise that I don't hate penises; it's just that I prefer soft ones, prefer the gentleness of the soft penis like the softness of my large breast, soft and creamy to touch. I don't hate them when they are hard but I do hate the society that portrays the hard penis as the way men must be, aggressive penis first in the world, fast cars, big tanks, cruise missiles.

Even some mystical men have wall pictures of Pan with an enormous erect penis as if this hard flesh portrays the zenith of the gentle gods meeting in the flow of things. My understanding of the gentle god would be one of a man who knew well his gentle penis.

I expect that sometimes too that these men feel, it is part of their own self-exploration in imaging new men, and they also need to feel good about their own erections, society has double standards with men too. On one hand men are pressured to be macho men, which requires them to present themselves as ruggedly sexual, while our puritan/Christian heritage requires men and women to censor their genuine sexual feelings. Expecting them to push forward in an aggressive thrusting way, without being in touch with their own feelings while denying the confusing painful feelings about real sex with real people and when erection is appropriate in loving contact.

I also realise why I hated, so much the room of a male acquaintance. He is deeply involved in magic and the focus of one wall in his room being many picures of hard penises, Lingam, from 'spiritually aware' societies. At the top of these pictures is a big round woman with open legs and a colourful fanny, her position at the top as if for once to honour a woman, her not being below. Every time I saw this I just felt the pain of a hard penis being thrust into my vagina without sensitivity. Now I want to say to him why don't you have any soft penises there, that is how mens' penises are most of the time. It's only the rigid tunnel vision, push, push, must achieve attitudes of our society that makes us look at the end project as being the hard penis. In fact the end product of sex (hopefully loving sex) is again the soft penis, either after orgasm or because it needn't be a prequisite of loving at all. I want to celebrate the soft penis and I don't want the hard penis to be seen as bad and fill men with guilt and pain, that we women have felt, knowing that to have a vagina at all, is bad.

I do want to redress the balance and celebrate the soft penis and the nice touching you can have with it, and the games you can play with it. I once had a lover who I really felt at ease with, who was circumsised. I used to draw faces on his glans and make the hole in the end the mouth and make it talk, like a puppet in a play, which was fun for both of us and a game we often played, telling stories to eachother. I also think there is a place to celebrate the hard penis and for it never to be celebrated would be really wrong. But first I would want to see the balance redressed and exploring what the soft penis could mean for them. See a society where the soft penis is celebrated as just another part of the male human body. Also as a woman I want to be unafraid to look a little more at what a soft penis means for me and not to hurt myself with the hard penis any more, the ready made answer to sex. Without looking at my own fears I lived not being able to break the silence for fear of not being listened to. And I what I need to gain is the strength, that all the silence has been taken away from me, and the fact that we do not have the safety in the streets.

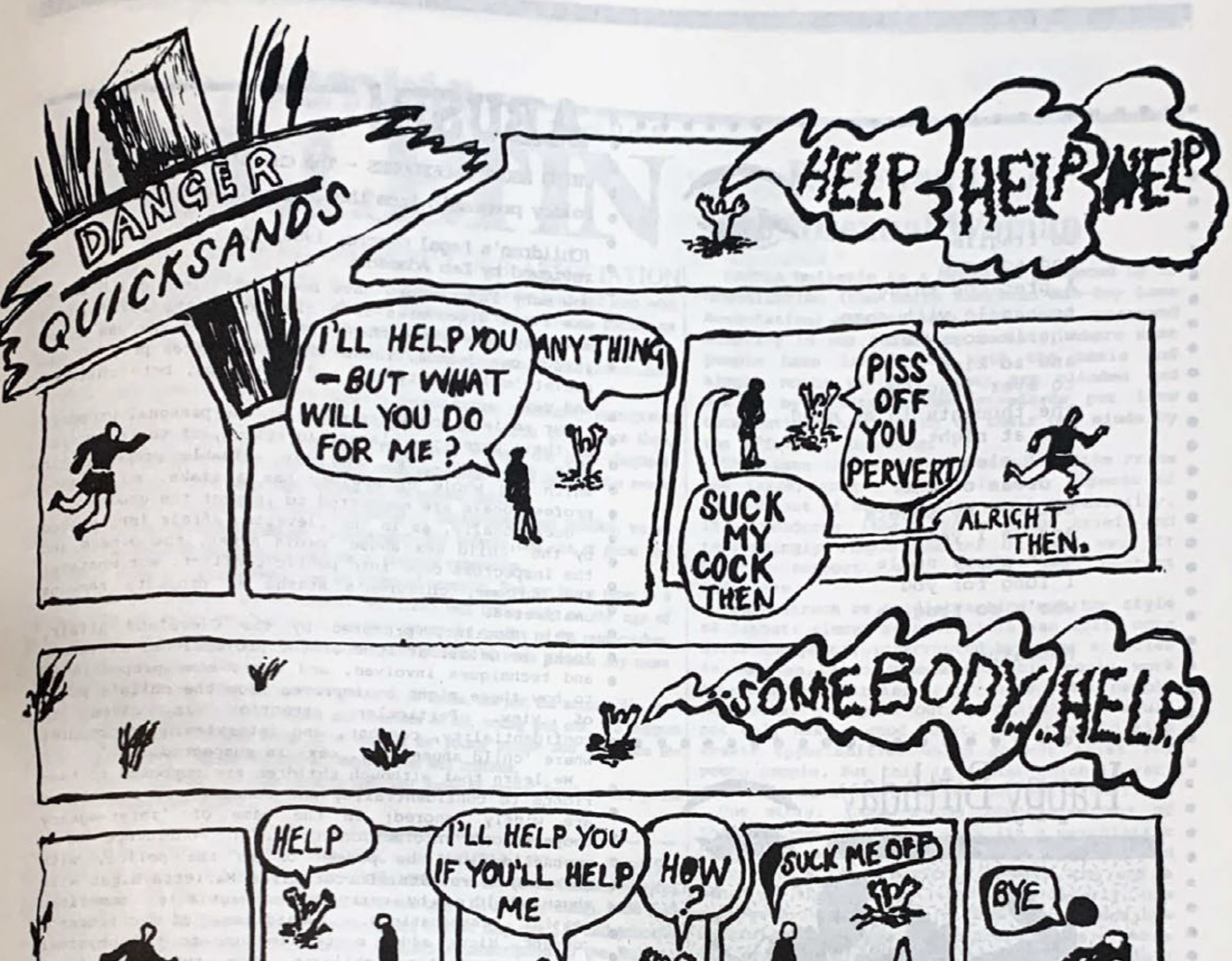
On a persoanl level I recognise how I give my power away by not sharing with them how their behaviour hurts me, but I also need to stop blaming them for all the hurts other men have inflicted on me, and open myself again with men I feel safe with, and not overstep the boundaries, because I grew up not knowing how to be myself in the street with a man, in bed with a man, at work with a man.

I want to acknowledge that the women who were raped at Molesworth in breaking the silence have unlocked in me recognition that I, like many women, have experienced enforced penetration against my will and that it is indeed rape. Only with a murmur of disapproval coming from my mouth and frequently had penetration beacuase I feared the man losing interest in me or because it was easier than struggling with trying to find out what I really want. Putting my uncomfortable feelings into the back of my mind and telling myself the fact I felt uncomfortable was because I'm screwed up, tense and unworthy of a man's love because I am fat big breasted and not very interesting person.

Our society convinces us that we women are not good enough without us actually realising the damage that has been done.

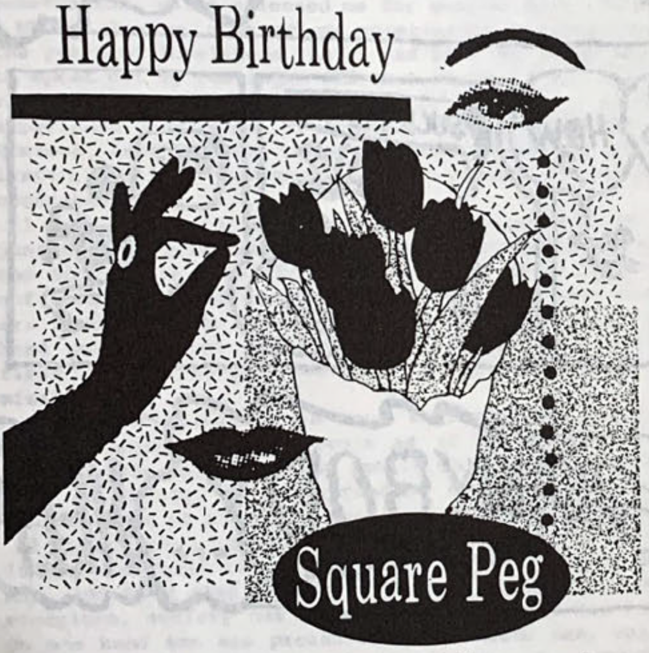
I can now look for my own realities and learn to begin to say NO to something I don't want, NO to things that don't damage me.

NO to hard insensitive penises in my vagina because they hurt. ks


DANGER
QUICKSANDS
HELP HELP HELP
I'LL HELP YOU – BUT WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR ME?
ANYTHING
PISS OFF YOU PERVERT
SUCK MY COCK THEN
ALRIGHT THEN.
...SOMEBODY...HELP
HELP
I'LL HELP YOU IF YOU'LL HELP ME
HOW?
SUCK ME OFF
GET LOST
BYE
...ANYBODY...HELP
PLEASE HELP ME I'LL DO ANYTHING – I'LL SUCK YOUR COCK
SPLASH
SPLOSH
BLOODY PERVERT

So fragile
and so pure
A precious thing
to handle with care,
who is so sweet
and so kind
to ever imagine
the thoughts in my mind
and at night
as I sleep
I dream of you
between my sheets
And as I yearn
with every smile
I long for you
who's so fragile

Fontaine



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ABUSE!

CHILD ABUSE PROCEDURES – The Child's Viewpoint

Policy proposals from the Children's Legal Centre

(Children's Legal Centre, 1988, £2)

reviewed by Leo Adamson.

How many fat careers have been made since child abuse was first discovered in a big way in the 1970's? And how many more since the extra frisson of sex was added in our own decade? Thousands of parasites prey on our society's hostility to, and terror of, both children and sex.

Our society considers children the personal property of their parents – slaves, in effect, at their owners' whim and mercy. Yet they are valuable property, in which the whole of society has a stake, so various professionals are empowered to inspect the goods.

Occasionally, as in the Cleveland affair (encouraged by the 'child sex abuse' media hype), the owners and the inspectors come into public conflict. But whatever the outcome, children's status as property remains unaffected.

This booklet, prompted by the Cleveland affair, looks in detail at some of the professional attitudes and techniques involved, and makes some proposals as to how these might be improved from the child's point of view. Particular attention is given to confidentiality, consent, and interviewing procedures where 'child abuse' (ie. sex) is suspected.

We learn that although children are supposed to have rights to confidentiality and consent, in fact these are widely ignored; in the name of 'inter-agency cooperation' information given in confidence to a counsellor will be passed on to the police, with devastating results. Doctors like Marietta Higgs will abuse children by carrying out intimate, sometimes painful examinations, regardless of children's consent. Higgs added mental torture to the physical one by separating children from their families, ignoring the child when it said it had not been abused.

'Child abuse,' say the authors, **'is often the most appalling symptom of the misuse of adult power over children – the result of adults' failure to respect the rights, autonomy, physical integrity and privacy of the child... There is a common chord in the attitudes to children which lead to abuse, and the attitudes which lead to actions believed to be in the child's 'best interests' which actually further abuse them: it is an assumption of authority which does not respect the child as a person with rights and views...**

'Until children are recognised as individual people with rights of their own, including developing rights to self-determination and equal rights to legal protection from all kinds of assault, they will continue to be dominated, degraded and abused, and frequently will feel powerless to complain or stop the abuse. The specific exemption from liability for assault which the law allows parents who physically punish their children is one sad indication of our society's hypocritical attitude to child abuse.'

As a campaigning document, I suspect that even its very modest aims (a slight improvement in the way children are treated during certain specific procedures) are unattainable: power is not amenable to argument, and social workers are not about to give up theirs over children, however much demonstrable harm they do. As a reference source – a record of some of our society's crazier attitudes to sex and children, this booklet has considerable value and interest.

nambla

june 1988

vol. 9 n. 5

BULLETIN

THE NORTH AMERICAN MAN/BOY LOVE ASSOCIATION is both political and educational. We work to organize support for boys and men who have or desire consensual sexual and emotional relationships and to educate society on their positive nature. We speak out against the oppression endured by men and boys who love one another and support the rights of all people to consensual intergenerational relationships.

NAMBLA was founded in 1978, within Boston's gay and lesbian community, in response to a particularly vicious witchhunt against man/boy lovers in that city. Since then, NAMBLA has worked to build a community of support through our local chapters, publications and conferences. Our spokespeople raise awareness of the issue in the media and academia, before community groups and among the general public.

While NAMBLA's members represent a diversity of backgrounds and politics, we all share a libertarian, humanistic attitude on sexuality. We believe that sex is good and wholesome and that it is an important medium of personal expression.

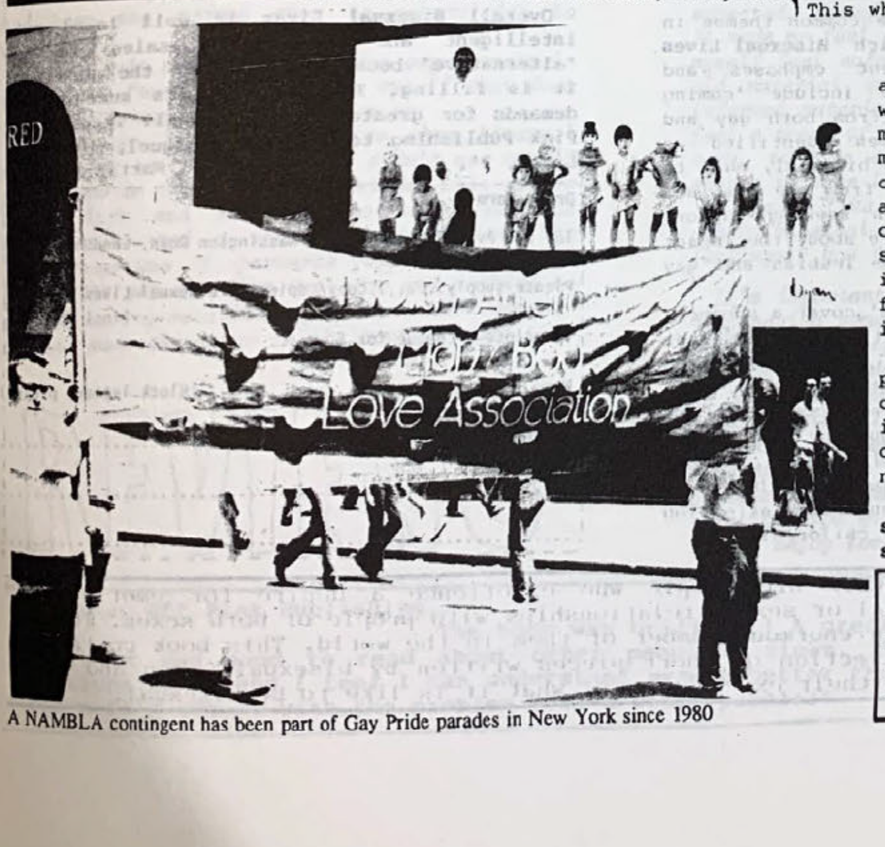
NAMBLA condemns sexual abuse and all forms of coercion. But we insist there is a distinction between coercive and consensual sex. Laws that focus only on the age of participants fail to capture that distinction, for they ignore the quality of the relationship. Differences in age do not preclude mutual, loving interactions between persons any more than differences in race or class.

NAMBLA calls for the empowerment of youth in all areas, not just the sexual. We are against arbitrary constraints on the rights and freedom of all, young and old. We support greater economic, political and social opportunities for young people and denounce the rampant ageism that segregates and isolates them in fear and mistrust.

We need your support. All who identify with our goals of sexual freedom and youth liberation are encouraged to join.

To join NAMBLA or receive more information, write NAMBLA, 537 Jones Street, No. 8418, San Francisco, CA 94102. Annual dues in NAMBLA are $20 (U.S., Canada, Mexico), $30 (elsewhere), $50 (three-year membership, domestic only), $100 (supporting), $500 (Life Membership). Upon application, persons with limited income may pay $10 and prisoners may receive free memberships. Membership includes a subscription to the Bulletin; non-members (individuals, libraries and institutions) may subscribe for $25 yearly. (Foreign subscriptions are $35.)

Photo and text from **NAMBLA Bulletin**, vol 9, no.5.



A NAMBLA contingent has been part of Gay Pride parades in New York since 1980

Reviewed By A Bisexual Woman

NAMBLA Bulletin is a magazine produced by an organisation (the North American Man-Boy Love Association) supporting a still very oppressed minority in our fucked up society, where most people have lost touch with the basic and simple roots of life. They are blinded and misled by attitudes and standards put into them rather than making up their own minds by the effort of thinking.

The issue this review is based on (the Pride '88 issue) covers positively many aspects of the subject of man/boy love and homosexuality. It introduces itself in a very brief and refreshingly simple, matter of fact way. It offers support and gives out contact addresses.

What struck me as distracting was the style of layout: almost every article was split onto different pages, interrupted by other articles in between. Also **Nambla Bulletin** could work even harder on trying to get more young people themselves to speak out. I think that would not only make a good point, but it would also create opportunities which do not exist for young people. But this is a task which is very difficult to achieve in the current situation.

One story, about a gay identified boy of thirteen who was locked away (in a psychiatric hospital) after a neighbour reported an overheard a conversation, between him and a man, to the police, shows so clearly how oppressed children are in this society and how carefully their oppressors protect their means of oppression against anybody who could liberatingly interfere. And how well the oppressors have learnt to transform their oppression onto this interfering opponent. This whole interaction takes place undercover and in the name of child protection!!?

All in all, I find **NAMBLA Bulletin** an actively supportive magazine for people who have been battered about far too much. That makes a refreshing change to many other magazines (even the ones that call themselves liberated) where there are still strict rules governing what one's sexuality has to be. Many people still don't get the idea that sexuality is not just a trend you can change, like from trainers into Doc Martins; that it is part of one's self.

The tremendous pressure this false promotion puts onto people who just can`t fit into their categories, will, if not understood, go on creating a lot of pain and desperation amongst people not tolerated.

I think NAMBLA Bulletin is a good start. I hope we will soon find a similar positive magazine in Britain.

IF ANYONE ELSE WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW THIS PARTICULAR ISSUE OF 'NAMBLA BULLETIN', OR THE LATER ISSUES, TO PUT AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW, WRITE TO **BI-MONTHLY** FOR A COPY, OR TO NAMBLA - ED.

BOOKS

'BISEXUAL LIVES' was conceived as a project at a discussion group at the Second National Bisexual Conference in April 1985. It was published earlier this year, and is selling well.

We present here two reviews:-

In **Bisexual Lives** seven women and five men give brief accounts of their own lives and sexuality. This they do fluently, and in some cases a degree of style.

The uniting factor is that they are people for whom past problems have been at least partially resolved by arriving at a bisexual identity, and affirming that identity with others.

The Off Pink Collective admit in the introduction that the contributors are not as representative in terms of age, race and background as they would like. They are right, in no way can the contributors be said to be representative of bisexuals in society at large (the majority of whom, I'd guess, would not identify as 'bisexual' at all). Neither could the pieces be said to reflect the diversity found, for example, in the London Bisexual Group.

> **'...there are common themes in bisexual lives in general, which BISEXUAL LIVES covers well,...'**

On the other hand there are common themes in bisexual lives in general, which **Bisexual Lives** covers well, with different emphases and different experiences. These include 'coming out', and facing prejudice (from both gay and straight). Most of the women identified as lesbian before identifying as bisexual, only to face rejection and hostility from the lesbians and gays that they had been seeking support from. Two of the men also write about the impact of prejudice from within the lesbian and gay movement.

Three of the 'bisexual lives' cover a subject, that on the rare occassions it is advertised as a discussion topic at the LBG, draw in a large number of people - that is: marriage.

It may only be a coincidence confirming my prejudices against marriage, but the only person to be married at the time of writing, Mandy, produced the most horrific part of the whole book. She explains how she cannot show affection to other women in front of her children:-

"I have to be guarded because of the children. I want them to establish their own sexuality and not be influenced by me."

The importance of being open and honest about sexuality with children is recognised in David Burkle's chapter.

"I believe the decision to be open with them was a good one. I have certainly derived a great deal of personal strength from it and I hope they may have too."

David Burkle and Kate Fearnley, both 'leading bisexual activists', write intelligently, relating their own lives to the views they hold. They both, as well as many of the other contributors, write with a clear and honest recollection of their childhood sexuality, acknowledging its importance and charting its development under the strong social pressures to conform.

As well as the lives portrayed there are pages of quotes neatly interspaced, around topics that include: Friends, Fantasy, Masturbation, Sex, Celibacy, Marriage, and Children. The book finishes with some old articles from **BI MONTHLY**, information, and articles on AIDS.

Overall Bisexual Lives is well layed out, intelligent and cheap. Its sales in the 'alternative' book shops reflect the need that it is filling. I hope that its success and demands for greater diversity will inspire Off Pink Publishing to produce a sequel, 'Bisexual Lives, 2'.

Martin Burgess

Order form

To: Off Pink Publishing, 21 Nassington Road, London NW3 2PX

Please supply........copy/copies of **Bisexual Lives** at £3.40 (incl 45p p&p)

I enclose a cheque for £.......

Name............................ (Block letters please)

Address..

....

....

BISEXUAL LIVES

Bisexuals are people who experience a desire for emotional, sensual or sexual relationships with people of both sexes. There are an enormous number of them in the world. This book contains a collection of short pieces written by bisexual women and men about their experiences of what it is like to be bisexual.

REVIEWS

BISEXUAL LIVES

I have been sexual and sexually attracted to both sexes since my early twenties, though I never thought of myself as bisexual. Because I felt a stronger charge to being sexual with men and loving and sensual with women, I identified my sexuality as a heterosexual supportive of gay rights. It felt it was the most honest assessment of my sexuality. I remember struggling painfully in 1979 to come out as heterosexual in an atmosphere where I felt it was unacceptable to be heterosexual if you were a committed caring feminist and loved woman. I felt a second class woman because I felt attracted to men. Especially as I found men much more difficult to relate to, needing more warmth and reassurance than most men ever feel comfortable of giving.

But I have over the recent years had to acknowledge that I feel a deep desire to work with men and to develop truly loving relationships with them, but not at the expense of my relationships with women. And I no longer wish to indulge in periods of self-hatred where I imagine that either I have worked through my stuff about men, to go on to have a loving relationship with a man and children, or that I'd recognise the impossibility of relationships with men and gracefully become a lesbian living in a rosy coloured women identified world. Neither of which is realistic.

Two months ago a woman from the London Bisexual Group came to live in my house. I felt a great deal of respect for her. Though her articulate expression of her bisexuality, and a close male bisexual friend of hers questioning me about my attitudes to my sexuality and my relationships, I began to look more deeply at some of the negative assumptions about myself.

*Having been asked to read and review a copy of **BISEXUAL LIVES** by the Off Pink collective, I gained a wider knowledge that other people had similar struggles to myself, struggles which I had been too scared even to acknowledge to myself.*

It has made sense of confusing experiences in my life. I found myself asking myself what does the word 'bisexual' bring up for me.

I remember back to the time when bisexual meant being on the fence, as I didn't see myself as someone on the fence, I dismissed this option in my life and continued to see myself as heterosexual and a second class person. The other image was of perverse yuppie fun sex you see in the ads in 'Time Out' for and nothing to do with caring relationships I have with women. I found each character in the book as part of myself. Pink Dandelion coming out as HIMSELF, guilt free, resonated with my feelings, crystallising my growing feeling that it's better to be me, even if being me isn't right on, than to suppress all the tension of being afraid of criticism of people who are by nature more 'right on' than me, giving myself a backache.

Also his desire to be right on for Robyn, uncovered how ashamed I feel to even like men on a buried level. I need to look at that more. It feels like a key to a lot of angry pushing away feeling I have towards men, on the top of things I feel truly angry about, either from personal experience in relationships, or from male attitudes in society at large.

Anna's privateness and fear of being seen in the world, and her romantic fantasy relationships with women full of unexpressed desire, I found painful and a recognition of my relationships with men.

And her reaction to her friend Gaby falling in love with her a reflection of some of my earlier behaviour with women which is changing slowly over the years, with experience.

Each person had something to say, that I had either thought or felt releasing some feeling of recognition in me.

Having read this I still don't want to call myself a bisexual, but I do want to continue to struggle to be whatever complex combination of human person I need to be, in order not to feel pain. Which means it's okay not to be one thing or another, but just to be myself, and I shall not be calling myself 'heterosexual' in future.

'anyone can be bisexual enough'

I didn't have the time to read all of the last three chapters so I read selectively. I found the section on AIDS terrifying, much worse than expected. Enough to put me off sex altogether. It made me feel I need to find out more and help myself feel safer. But I'm also told that it's old material and now out of date, and more informed material is available, which makes me feel a sheet of paper should be put in with each copy to this effect, so that people don't get scared to have lovers at all.

I really like the last page, the line 'anyone can be bisexual enough' brought together all the feelings I had from the book.

It's important that we talk to eachother and stop saying something we do is bad or wrong, if we need to do it to feel good about ourselves. Because it is no better than saying lesbianism is unnatural. Loving women is one of the most natural things I've ever done in my life, I find it hard to understand why people find it unnatural. It's not only natural, but pleasurable and fun. One day I hope relationships with men will be as easy and that I will enjoy loving both.

Kerry Sunshine

'Dear Off Pink Publishing,

The book was brilliant! A great help to me. I feel so cut off here. It was good to read about other people's views. The book brought out a lot of emotions in me and I feel I can understand myself better than before, although I've always known it's not me with the problem - it's other people!'

FILM

'She must be seeing things'

SHE MUST BE SEEING THINGS (18) (Shelia McLaughlin, 1987, US/W. Germany) Shelia Dabney, Lois Weaver, Kyle DeCamp, John Erdman. 94 mins.

I read the preview in the Pink Paper, (Sept. 1st) and intrigued by calls of 'BAN IT! PORNOGRAPHIC! WOMEN-HATING! SADO-MASOCHISTIC' from certain lesbian feminists I went to see 'She must be seeing things'.

Despite the director (and writer) Shelia McLaughlin attempting to address many issues around lesbian sexuality including 'the power dynamics inherent in women's relationships with each-other, the use of dildoes, obsessive jealousy and the fascination/fear of lesbians about their lovers' heterosexual pasts', I found this film boring.

The film was also reviewed in the ***Pink Paper*** *(Sep. 15th), by Gaz Gorham, with the following excerpts:-*

'WHEN Agatha, a human rights lawyer discovers Jo's (her film-maker girlfriend) journal detailing - with snapshots - her heterosexual past, she begins to suspect that Jo's amorous adventures are not all history. The film's plotline is almost Shakespearean in its simplicity and potential for jealous fantasy and retribution'.

'Why in a film about lesbians is so much of the time given over to women having sex with men. Part of the film's claim to boldness is that it takes on taboos and issues of sexuality that the lesbian community has fearfully steered clear of, and in the scenes of sex between two women (some of the best played moments in the film), where they play with lingerie, trade rôles and toy with the idea of dildoes, it does cover some cinematically new ground. But this scene apart it is disappointing and perverse to discover that a film with lesbianism at its heart has heterosexuality in its libido.

This central complaint apart, the film is just not very good. It has all the frailties that have come to be associated with low budget films - including disjointed dialogue, unresolved ideas and images and a device of a film within a film that fails because the inner film is unbelievably bad.'

I didn't feel the film to be anti-lesbian, if anything it highlighted the failings of heterosexual encounters, and the point was made that the sadomasochistic nature of these had been 'too real'.

In Agatha's mind it was this 'heterosexual past' which loomed threateningly over their homosexual present. In the end these fears were proved groundless, yet no real attempt was made to look at how Jo felt about her own bisexuality.

I hope we can have a bisexual woman reviewing this film in the next issue.

Masturbation:- Time for Research

The subject of masturbation remains a blind spot on our growing knowledge of human sexual activity. For this reason your article on this subject was welcome for as long as masturbation remains a thing which it's 'O.K. to do but not to talk about' this important subject will remain unknown teritory and our understanding of ourselves, our sex lives, our fantasies and the basis on which we make decisions will remain defective. It would be of interest if **Bi-monthly** published:-

1. A bibliography on the subject.
2. A synopsis of the current academic views on the subject.
3. A questionaire to readers and in due course
4. The results of the questionaire with an analysis.

'I must disagree violently'

Dear Editor,

I'm afraid I must disagree violently with your magazine. To be bi-sexual is a specious condition. It is neither one thing nor the other. Basically we are all either heterosexual or homosexual and usually by the age of 26 we have sorted ourselves out. George Melley as a teenager was gay but then packed it in and became a married man with three children. Oscar Wilde went from being a married man with two children to being gay. There is nothing wrong with all this. Sometimes a young man will go through a phase. There are also men who are really straight but who 'indulge' in gay activities, but they are not gay. I have slept with women and enjoyed it, but now I sleep exclusively with men.

Yours Sincerely,

Howard Pinner, London W2

In Praise of the Humble Wank

Dear Editor,

I have just received my first subscription copy of Bi-monthly. I did wonder whether it would ever arrive, but it did and I'm glad.

I'm writing partly to thank you for having the determination to produce Bi-monthly. We should all be grateful that the magazine exists at all, rather than grumbling about any supposed deficiencies!

But mostly I'm writing in response to the article on wanking. I will say first off that I agree with the whole thing : it is a curiously suppressed and taboo activity. I found your article very courageous - first, to address the subject at all; second, to defend and even praise the humble wank; third, to refer the article so strongly to your own personal experience and fourthly, not to pretend that it is always wonderful, when in fáct it is quite often a pre-sleep routine bringing brief enjoyment and relief.

To put these remarks in some sort of context, I can say that I am bisexual by nature, and male; I have a girlfriend (who doesn't know) with whom I have a good (hetero) sexual relationship. My only male partners to date have been strictly fantasy.

All the best and thanks. Bi-Monthly Reader.

Just because I'm bisexual don't assume I'm a slag!

I've been amazed to receive letters from men who read Bi-Monthly who seem to assume that because I'm bisexual then I must be a slag.

The offers I have been made in recent months have amazed, saddened and sometimes made me laugh. Some assume I'll be into group sex, some take it for granted I'll take up any offer of sex, regardless of who it was that was offering it. Some have asked my girlfriend and myself to be part of a fantasy of theirs, along the lines of a bedroom scene show. The reality is far from all these fantasies, sorry to disappoint you folks!

I'm not into group sex, threesomes or foursomes! My sexual life is a very private part of my life, so I'm not going to answer letters along the lines of what I like in bed, or even who I like to go to bed with. I'm actually married, so I'm not intersted in other men purely for sex.

It's no wonder with some of their attitudes that they are not successful in their relationships.

One letter read, '**I know you are bisexual, so you will know what I am after, to have sex**'.

Personally I believe that to have a good sexual relationship, a loving relationship is also needed. But some of the letter writers assume I don't have feelings.

Please don't assume that because I'm bisexual it must mean I'm into a whole host of weird and kinky situations.

Don't assume because I'm bisexual I **must be a slag!**

- Vi

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Bisexual Groups

BRITAIN

MANCHESTER: meet at Resource Centre, 61 Bloom St. 1st Thursday monthly 8.30 - 10.00 Contact Paul Owen on 061-236 5986 (4-10pm) or 061-228 3554 (2-4pm).

MANCHESTER WOMEN'S BISEXUAL GROUP - meet 2nd Thursday of the month, at Manchester Gay Centre, 61a Bloom St, Manchester. For further info: Vi, c/o WBG, P.O.Box 153, Manchester M60 1LP.

EDINBURGH Bisexual Group meets Thursdays, 8 pm, at Lesbian and Gay Community Centre, 58a Broughton St. For details contact Bisexual Phoneline.

LONDON BISEXUAL WOMEN'S GROUP, BM LBWG, London WC1N 3XX

The older lesbian and bisexual women's group is a non-scene group that meets for meals, etc. in London SW1. Telephone: 01- 979 0695 (6-8 pm).

LONDON Bisexual Group meets Mondays at the Fallen Angel, 8.30pm. 65 Graham Street, London N1. Details : David 01-340 5729.

TYNESIDE: Bisexual contact: Simon Henderson, 31 Harrison Place, Sndyford, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE2 1DE.

University of Anglia Bisexual Group, University House, UEA, Norwich, Norfolk - welcomes non-students

SIGMA: support for relationships where one partner is gay or bisexual. Details LLGS 01-837-7324.

Contact for bisexuals in NALGO: Write - Bisexuals in NALGO, BM BI, London WC1N 3XX

Bisexuals and married gay group. Details: Nigel 01-558-5203 (5.30-10pm)

ABROAD

United States:

Boston Bisexual Womens' Network, PO Box 639, Cambridge MA02140.

Boston Bisexual Mens' Network, PO Box 1645, Cambridge MA 02238.

East Coast Bisexual Network, PO Box 639, Cambridge MA 02140.

San Francisco Bisexual Centre, 1757 Hayes St. San Francisco CA 94117.

Chicago Bi-Ways, PO Box A333 Q, Chicago ILL 60690.

'versity of Massachusetts Bisexual Group, Amhurst MA 01002.

New York: Bisexual Support Group c/o Bill Himelhoch, 4861 Broadway, Apt. No. 6-S. NY 10034.

The Bulletin Board, PO Box 8556, New York NY 10150.

Netherlands:
Landelijk Netwerk Biseksualiteit Postbus 5087, 1007 AB, Amsterdam or telephone Vroomshoop 05498-44384.

West Germany:

Initiative Bisexualler Frauen & Manner, c/o E. Kocher, Am Niddatal 31, D-6000, FRANKFURT-A-M 90. 069- 76 19 43

Die Lade, 'Bi-Initiative', Karl-Marx-Strasse 58, D1000 BERLIN 44. 030-624 37 61. Thurs 11.00 - 13.00

PUBLICATIONS:

America:
BI WOMEN - newsletter of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network - see Groups
The BI MONTHLY - newsletter of the Boston Bisexual Men's Network - see Groups

Netherlands:
Bi-Nieuws - published by the Landelijk Netwerk Bisexualiteit - see Groups

ADVICE:

BISEXUAL PHONELINE: 031-557 3620 Thursday 7.30-9.30 pm.

London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard (24hrs) 01-837-7324.

London Lesbian Line 01-251 6911.

London Friend helpline 01-837 3337 (7.30-10 pm)
For lesbians & bisexual women 01-281 4970 (Th 7.30-10pm).

Gay Legal Advice 01-253 2043 (Mon - Fri 7-10pm).

AIDS Helpline: Terrence Higgins Trust 01-242 1010 (3-10pm).

GALOP & LESPOP: Gay & Lesbian Police Monitoring Groups 01-278 6215/ 01-833 4996

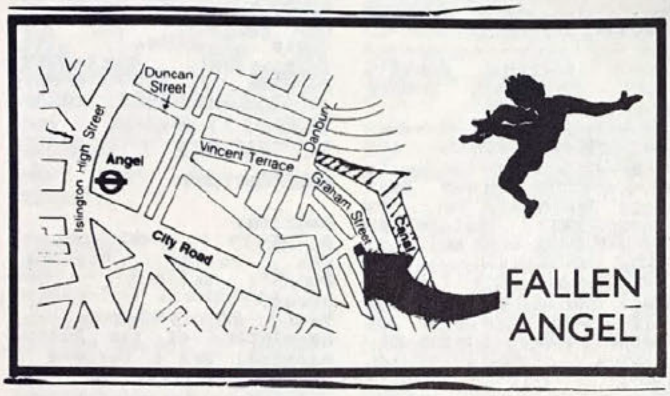
CAMPAIGN GROUPS:

Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) 01-833 3912

Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Action (OLGA) 01-833 3860

LONDON BISEXUAL GROUP

The **London Bisexual Group** meets every Monday evening at 8.30 pm, upstairs at the Fallen Angel (65 Graham St, N1), a friendly pub in Islington. The LBG is open to people of all sexual identities, and aims to provide a relaxed, but stimulating atmosphere. Why don't you come and make some new friends!



For further information write to :- **LBG, BM BI, LONDON WC1N 3XX.** Or phone David: 01 340 5729

Our programme of events to the end of October:

OCTOBER

Monday 3rd	**Transvestism and Transexuality**
Saturday 8th	**Monthly planning meeting.** 2-4 pm. A friendly welcome for all those who want to help run the group! Refreshments provided, you bring the ideas!
Monday 10th	**Speaker from the English Collective of Prostitutes.**
Monday 17th	**Speaker from the Society of Friends (Quakers).**
Monday 24th	**Work on the forthcoming conference**
Friday 28th (evening) - Sunday 30th (afternoon)	*NATIONAL BISEXUAL CONFERENCE* *VENUE: Friends Meeting House, Hampstead* *WORKSHOPS; FUN, OLD FRIENDS, NEW FRIENDS*
Monday 31st	Conference follow-up

CALLING ALL WIMMIN!

On the second Monday of each month, we extend a particularly warm welcome to bisexual wimmin at the London Bisexual Group. Wimmin organise these meetings, lead discussions and run workshops on themes of particular relevance to wimmin. Any womyn interested in being involved in planning, or who can offer workshops, ideas for discussions etc, contact Al via LBG.

HEAR THE WORD

Hear the word!
The law is hear to PROTECT us!
Hear the word!
The police are our FRIENDS!
Hear the word!
The courts are here to SERVE us!
Watch the news, tv, papers, unbiased ITV, BBC, and hear the word!
Send soldiers to Northern Ireland,
to fight for peace,
in a war that isn't a war.
Hear the word!
Read all about it in the SCUM.
No child is SAFE,
(which is why they must be locked away).
Read the word!
'You've got to laugh.
Heard the one about the QUEERS getting beat up, thrown out, terrorised, killed.'
This is a death threat: 'HA, HA, HA!'
'Laughed so much, I was crying,
but I still don't get the joke!
'We've got to protect children from your ideas!'
said the policeman, in my flat,
said the policeman, holding a sledgehammer,
said the policeman, holding a microphone
(smile you're on the radio)
Another time, another place, same country:
Door slams, echo, then silence.
'We've got to protect children from your ideas!'
said the Tory politician.
An idea gets passed on into the innocent mind of a child. Homosexuality, like a cancer grows, making that child rotten to the core (Diana Core, watch out children!). The child is no longer a child (innocence equals childhood), rather a corrupted 'victim', who can only go on to corrupt in turn. 'How can we break the CYCLE OF ABUSE?' say the social workers. Their bible says that sex is about power, not pleasure or love. Homo-erotic desire like a cancer grows. Creeping like a seething black mass, through the pure minds of the children, who are powerless to resist (who can resist, being irresistable), and through the population as a whole (who are basically evil). There is no such thing as society, only individuals, who must be SAVED. They need protecting from their own evil nature, say those who have
SEEN THE LIGHT AND **HEARD THE WORD.**
And the word is.........(don't laugh).....
LOVE!
(I still don't get the joke).

MB